

Transitions in Training for Changing Times

Similar to the analog to digital transition for television, training has made a similar move. Technology has pushed training to become more innovative and create a need for organizations to constantly develop their strategies. These strategies help organizations stay a head of the curve to unleash the potential that will serve their needs. There have been many new methods of training that have started to gain popularity such as virtual methods, but there are some critics that do not agree that it is the most effective form of training. (Berkshire Associates, Inc, 2008)

Traditionally training courses have taken place in a classroom setting. There would be an instructor and teaching students around desks with manuals. Some examples of classroom training include on the job coaching and employee orientation. More modern trends include “multimedia and online training, Web-based training (WBT), mentoring programs, brown bags (transfer of training), book clubs, and new employee on-boarding.” (Berkshire Associates, Inc, 2008) More interactive trainings have been done via the Internet and intranet for its convenience and accessibility to more people. The cost of a new technological method of training has become less expensive, consumes less resources and more schedule friendly for many organizations. The training can be done during your own time. (Berkshire Associates, Inc, 2008)

Some organizations do not feel they benefit from methods such as webinars (online meetings) or any more of the modern trends, but feel a combination is best. Online classes incorporate the structure of a class where students meet according to schedule using the Internet or other types of media. Students will meet online and participate in discussions online and be able to ask the instructor questions. Similar to other methods of training a disadvantage would be that the portal being used might require too advanced of technology for the participant or

organization to properly use. However one trend is evident for all areas, classroom training is no longer the only way to learn. There are so many mediums an organization can use; a unique blend can be designed for an organization. (Berkshire Associates, Inc, 2008)

Most organizations that use a mixture of methods to training, because research has shown that people learn better from a mix of training. This can work well in our increasingly diverse society. Between 2000 and 2003, four million immigrants entered the United States, many of who do not know how to speak English. (Dutkowsky, 2009) To add to that large number of immigrants, the United States Department of Education estimated that in 2004, forty million Americans were unable to read effectively. This is a staggering number that many organizations need to accommodate quickly to respond to the market. (Dutkowsky, 2009)

Some organizations have started to train non-English speaking employees in a bi-lingual training program. Programs that are translated help employees make a transition to English by incorporating commonly used words to help the employee assimilate. Training programs such as translated programs are conducted in ways sensitive to employee's cultural differences and allow organizations become more diverse. This type of training will help mend some of the gaps that have formed in the fabric of the organization. (Dutkowsky, 2009)

Cross training, or Multiskilling, is another method organizations are using to help them respond to the rapidly changing markets and personnel needs. In the past an employee was only trained in one job, however today organizations are starting to recognize the value of cross training their employees. Cross training employees' help reduce the time needed to replace a person, or help an overwhelmed employee. An employee can begin work immediately when placed in another department and begin to work productively. In an article in the *London Financial Times* (October 5, 2005), cross training can help organizations expand their business

capabilities while not having to expand their staff. It can also help satisfy employees as well as enhance employee performance in the long run. (Dutkowsky, 2009)

Simulation games are starting to appear more in organization, as well as schools. Most organizations have purchased their simulation games from outside sources, but have also started to develop their own programs. In study by Faria (1987) two-thirds of the companies using business games for initial training and 63.6% using the games for ongoing training have developed their own simulation games. This type of training will help organizations customize their training to their own needs. The interactive experience will help most participants get the most out of training. (Faria & Nulsen, 1996)

Since the beginning of simulation games in the 1950s for management training, the numbers are expected to soar in the future. By the 1970s only 8.7% organizations were using simulation games for trainings, either initial or ongoing. A majority of companies using business simulation games, 82.6%, started using the games after 1980. In the span of a decade there was a 73.9% increase showing the rapid increase of simulation games. This span has moved across the ocean to Russia, China, Estonia, Latvia and Slovenia, just to name a few places, with great success. (Faria & Nulsen, 1996)

Organizations today are starting to learn the value of their employees. They are valued assets that they have invested a lot of time and money. Billions of dollars have been spent on training in organizations, so training in the right format to be effective should be the first priority. Most companies have decided to combine two methods to meet the learning needs of the participants. This method has found to cover a wider base for most training outcomes. The numbers of classes were once used to evaluate training programs, but today organizations are using the degree to which the training assisted in the transfer of new skills to the job and the

extent that individual and group performance improves. Organizations today are seeing that having value behind the numbers is more important than just the number. (Dutkowsky, 2009)

Training has resulted in billions of dollars spent in the US, but the type of training that is effective becomes an important issue when thousand of dollars are spent on one program. In a study by Sandra, Black and Lisa Lynch (1997) the different dimensions of training have shown to have different impacts. Crucial distinction in training types when assessing impacts on productivity growth may be different for general versus specific. People are rational participants that will choose the amount of energy they devote to the training, which impacts the addition to their human capital. (O'Connell & Barrett, 1999)

According the experimental learning theory, a person who is having fun and enjoys what they are learning will retain more over a span of time. About 50% of what is learned will be forgotten when a person leaves the door, and the number start to dwindle even more as time goes on. The more incentives a person has to learn, more personal than monetary, the more information a person will retain in the future. A person will also benefit more from training they are practicing and utilizing. (O'Connell & Barrett, 1999)

Reference

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